

Newsletter

Weekly news at St Christopher's



Dear Parents,

We enjoyed a full week in school this week (!) and, with no residential trips happening, we had all year groups in school! It was lovely to see our Year 4s and 6s back from their travels, you can read more about Year 4s time away,

in this week's newsletter, and Year 6s will feature next week.

As I mentioned last week, we will be hosting an English Curriculum Evening after half-term, on Wednesday 7th June, which we hope many parents will attend. Mr Pretara and Miss Johns have sent out an email which includes a Google Form to register your attendance.

Ahead of this, I wanted to address how we have done much to raise the profile of the English curriculum, and more specifically reading, this year. You know it is my favourite topic to talk about, but reading is such a crucial element of every child's education, and it is an essential skill as they transition through life. The better a child can read, the easier it will be for them to learn what they need at school.

Every day, we have a dedicated reading time, straight after lunch, when the children enjoy the book they are reading and read to an adult. The expectation is that every child gets heard at least once per week by an adult, and this is then recorded in the pupil's School Planner. To that end, although the life of a parent is often hectic, our expectation is that you will also be reading with your child at least once a day at a regularly scheduled time. I know I will be preaching to the choir to the majority of our parents, but you have a crucial role to play in a child's engagement and achievement in school, and the impact of a child's success is never greater than when we are working in partnership. Parents often will read aloud with younger children, but this becomes less so as children get older. Parents will often ask, "*Why would I need to carry on reading to/with my child as they can read independently?*"; however, I want to let you know that reading aloud to already-fluent readers can still be hugely valuable, not least for my reasons below:

- You can share books that might be too sophisticated or challenging to read independently. These books that are too long for their current level of reading stamina, or books with tricky vocabulary

or that introduce tricky concepts that need explaining benefit from discussion with an adult and allows you to stretch the reading-diet and understanding.

- Sharing a book, and listening to you read helps to model fluent, expressive reading for a child. It allows children to hear how a skilled reader brings the words on the page to life, using their voice to suggest meaning within a text.

- One of the most important things to do with competent readers is to spend time discussing ideas and share opinions about what you're reading as opposed to doing the physical reading on the page. This is great educationally, as it helps children to think deeply about a text and practise justifying their opinions, but it can also help to build the habit of reading and talking together: a wonderful end in itself.

- And probably, most importantly, it safeguards some shared time together between parent (both mum and dad) and child – time to enjoy a book that you both want to read, a book you now share in common.

Hand on heart, I can say that there is absolutely no replacement for time spent sharing a book with your son or daughter – end of story. This is the single most impactful thing you can do to help them educationally. The children who find greater success in school are those voracious readers. To this end, a small plea...when you do share or read together, please note this in your child's Planner as we would do at school. This way, we can work together and track how this is being facilitated to continue your child's learning journey.

Finally, this week, we began to turn our attention to our upcoming 130th birthday, and had a lovely picture taken with pupils creating the shape of the number "130". There will be a little bit of media coming your way to show you the process and the final outcome, so look out for that. Huge thanks to Mrs Taggart (Ollie and Ella) and her sister for helping us with the logistics and the technology!

Have a lovely weekend. Do remember that next week is our final week before half term. This is a four day week, with our staff training on the Friday, when pupils will not be in school.

Mr Carter
Head Teacher

Newsletter

Weekly news at St Christopher's



Year 1

As part of our introduction of DT into our school curriculum, Year 1 have been designing and making a fruit kebab this term. We started off by doing a class survey, on which fruit we like the most. This week, we tasted different fruits and started thinking about what fruit we would like to put on our kebab. We spoke about being safe and washing our hands. The children thoroughly enjoyed our fruit tasting session.



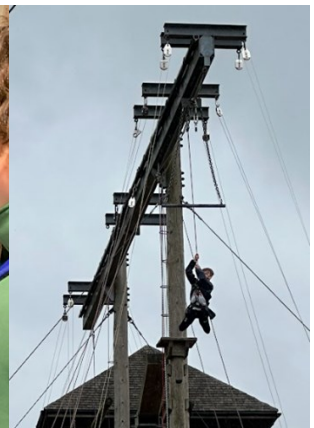
Year 4

Last week, Year 4 enjoyed the much anticipated residential to Grosvenor Hall. Leaving on Wednesday, our first stop was a visit to Lullingstone Roman Villa, to experience a hands-on workshop about what it was like in Roman Britain and how the Villa was an incredibly important historical discovery.

The children were able to play the role of archaeologists as they uncovered artefacts in sand trays and formulated ideas on why these were important. Did you know that the villa was an extremely important discovery as it contained a wall painting in the religious part of the building indicating that Christianity was being practised in Britain in the 4th Century AD alongside the worshipping of Roman gods? After lunch, we ventured onto Grosvenor Hall and, after depositing our luggage, we were off to participate in our first activity. Unfortunately, the weather was not on our side, but after a quick lightning storm, we were back outside taking part in obstacle courses and tug of war. Even the teachers were roped in - no pun intended!

Much to the teachers' delight, everyone slept really well and so we were up early taking part the next day in activities such as team building, archery, fire lighting and the famous 3G Swing. The evening activity consisted of water balloons and needless to say some people ended up wet - but not as much as our leader Callum who actively encouraged us to throw water at him. Unsurprisingly, the second night involved a quicker bed time and most of the children having to be woken up in the morning as no one was as keen to get up due to being so tired from all the fresh air! Despite the rain all morning, the last activity of the

residential was the Leap of Faith. Whilst some of us were not as keen to jump off an extremely tall pole, everyone had a go and a few even managed to make it to the top with a spectacular jump to catch a trapeze bar - spoiler alert - everyone missed! The children were brilliantly behaved throughout the whole trip and tried every activity to the best of their ability, even if it was scary! Well done, Year 4.



Newsletter

Weekly news at St Christopher's



Design Technology

Design creates culture. Culture shapes values. Values determine the future.

Robert L. Peters

This term, we have launched a brand new and exciting subject into our curriculum...Design & Technology! DT is a practical subject that is focussed on problem solving and developing creative and critical thinking. It also feeds into our big drive in STEM.

Every DT topic will involve research and evaluating existing products, as well as designing, planning, making and evaluating a new product, based upon a given Design Brief. It will be a creative, engaging and cross-curricular journey for the children, which will develop and enhance their ability to use many of our Character Values, including: Creativity, Teamwork, Enthusiasm, Common Sense and Adaptability. DT will provide our children with the fundamental skills that are vital in later life, especially the Resilience and Ambition to try again, if at first they don't succeed!

Each term, we will be introducing a new and exciting aspect of DT across the whole school, as part of our ever-growing curriculum, including Food

Technology, Textiles and Mechanical Systems.

This term, our focus has been Food Technology. We have discussed the importance of healthy eating and maintaining a balanced diet; hygiene and risks when preparing food and skills that we will be using throughout.

Each Year group has been given a Design Brief, conducted market research on items already available (including taste-testing) and are now in the process of designing their own product, using Computer Aided Design (CAD). We have had excellent feedback on our DT journey so far from both staff and pupils and we look forward to seeing

more of this enthusiasm as our DT skills evolve.

We know that exposing our children to DT will allow them to experience and understand the world in a more meaningful way. This subject will increase our pupils' opportunities and open them up to a breadth of knowledge from a STEM perspective - showing them that the possibilities for

their futures are endless; we may have many Engineers, Designers, Architects, Chefs and Food Scientists in the making!

Make sure you ask your son/daughter what they have been investigating in DT this term so far (and read the Year 1 article too!)



Newsletter

Weekly news at St Christopher's



Charity work: Re-engage tea party

Last Friday, we invited the Charity, Re-engage, into school and met some guests who came to join us. They were treated to fantastic cakes and music, poetry and song, and various children from Year 5 came to chat with our guests and compared and contrasted their lives at school.

One of our guests, Audrey, who was 92, told us about her time at school and how boys got to play sports whilst she did needlework classes. Audrey was at school during the war so often, due to rationing, the children did not have lunch. Another guest, Pamela, left school at 15 and worked in an office. Her school lunchtime was 30 mins and she had to walk over 2 miles to the office and 2 miles home each day. The children were very surprised that our guest did not have books to read at home, and that they didn't learn a foreign languages.

Moving forward, we will be working with Re-engage each term to give back to our sometimes lost generation and ensure our children look at the past as well as their future



Review

Please leave a reviews for us by using the link or QR code:



<https://g.page/r/Cd0V7pq2h8TCEAg/review>

Emailing teachers

REMINDER: ALL emails to teachers should use the

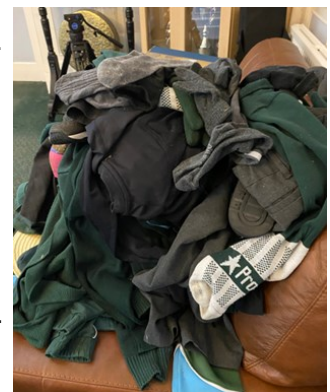
mail@stchristophersthehall.org.uk



It is very likely that emails will not get to their destination if you email teachers directly.

Lost Property

We have a huge pile of unnamed lost property which has been hanging around all term. We have redistributed the named items, but if the rest is not claimed by the end of this half term, the items will either make their way to second-hand uniform or be disposed of.



Newsletter

Weekly news at St Christopher's



Music

Year 1 and 2 are looking forward to presenting their Music concert next week, this is on **Wednesday 24th May at 9am**. We anticipate that it will last for around an hour and 15 minutes. Entry will be via the main gate from 8.50. The Junior Choir will be opening the concert, therefore any Year 3 Choir parents are also very welcome to join us.



Pupil Success

Elliot (Year 4) and George (Year 4), along with Sidarth and Aryan (Year 4) represented New Beckenham Cricket Club in the 1st round of the U9 SPL Bash on Sunday 14th May. The boys all played terrifically and won 3 of their 4 matches (including an exciting 1 run win over local rivals Beckenham A in the final game). Well done to them all.



If any pupils experience success outside of School, we'd love to hear about it, so do let Mr Carter know.

Promotional Video Filming

Wednesday was an exciting day for the School as we had a videographer here, filming many aspects of our school life for a new promotional film. When it is edited, it will feature in pride of place on our website and social media. The children were fantastic, and we know this will give prospective parents a real insight into our educational ethos!

The children thoroughly enjoyed taking part and were fantastic ambassadors for the School.

We know that this will give prospective parents a real insight into our educational ethos and hopefully, will be of interest to our current parents too.



Social Media

There have been some great new posts this week about our European Day of Languages and our parent assemblies on our social media channels so follow us at [@stchristhehall](#) on insta and Twitter, as well at [@stchristhehallsport](#) to get all the inside info from school life!



What's Happening Next Week

- 🕒 **Monday 22nd May**
- Year 5 leave for Residential Trip: Bowles.
- 🕒 **Tuesday 23rd May**
- ISA Cricket Tournament - selected pupils to play (all day)
- 🕒 **Wednesday 24th May**
- Year 1 and 2 Music Concert (09:00-10:30)
- Year 5 return from Residential Trip: Bowles
- 🕒 **Thursday 25th May**
- Year 6 Cricket v Colfes - all children to play (15:15-16:30)
- Last day of the half-term
- 🕒 **Friday 19th May**
- **NO SCHOOL - INSET DAY**